Survey of Latur-Bodhan Railway line

*231. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken the survey of Latur-Bodhan railway line announced by the then Railway Minister at Nanded on the 3rd March, 1996; and

(b) if so, the present status of the survey and by when the survey is likely to completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir. No such announcement was made by the then Railway Minister

(b) Does not arise.

Forest cover in North-Eastern Region

*232. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of forest cover in the North-Eastern States at the begining of 1980 and 1990;

(b) the position at the end of 1995;

(c) the reasons for reduction in the forest cover, if any; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FOREST (CAPT. JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHAD): (a) The details of forest cover in the North-Eastern States as per the assessments of forest cover done for various periods are given in statment-I. (See below).

(b) The details of the latest assessment of forest cover of the period 1991—93 is given at Annexure-I. The assessment work of the period 1993—95 is in progress.

(c) The reasons for reduction in the forest cover are mainly due to shifting cultivation, forest fires, grazing and wide gap in demand and supply of fuelwood, fodder and small timber resulting in unsustainable withdrawals.

(d) The various steps taken by the Government to check reduction in the forest cover are given in Statement-II.

Statement-I

Details of assessment of forest cover done for the periods 1981—1983, 1989—1991 and 1991—1993

(Area in sq. km)

Name of the State	Assessment Year 1987 (for the period of 1981-83)	Assessment Year 1993 (for the period of 1989-91)	Assessment Year 1995 (for the period of 1991-1993)
1. Arunachal Pradesh	60,500	68,661	68.621
2. Assam	26,386	24,508	24,061
3. Manipur	17,679	17,621	17,558
4. Meghalaya	16,511	15,769	15,714
5. Mizoram	19,092	18,697	18,576
6. Nagaland	14,351	14,348	14,291
7. Tripura	5,743	5,538	5,538

Statement-II

Steps taken by Government to check reduction of Forest Cover in North Eastern States

(i) Draft Notification under Section 3(1) and 3(2) (xiv) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Rule 5(1) (x) and 5(2) Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, restricting certain activities in States/Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Nagaland has been issued for protecting and improving the quality of the environment.

(ii) Guidelines have been issued to all the States/UTs to involve the village community in the protection and regeneration of forest through a mechanism of usufruct sharing and benefit distribution (Joint Forest Management).

(iii) Steps have been undertaken to restore and augment forest cover through afforestation/tree planting activities both within & outside Government forest area.

(iv) All the State/Union Territories Government have been requested to implement the recommendations of the Policy Advisory Groups on wood substitution and fuelwood conservation.

(v) Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been enacted to regulate the diversion of forest lands for non-forestry purposes without prior approval of the Central Government.

(vi) A total of 13,900 sq. km of the forest area of North Eastern States has been declared as National Parks and Sancturies.

(vii) Central assistance of Rs. 2.85 crores has been given to State of Meghalaya in 1993-94 and 1994-95 for acquisition of private lands for extension and restoration of Elephant habitate.

Rail Fare Concession to Senior Citizens

*233. SHRI SUSHILKUMAP SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been persistent demands for extending the fare concession to senior citizens in respect of different classes of rail travel above second class;

(b) if so, Government's decision in this regard; and

(c) the estimated loss of revenue per annum in case the travel concession to senior citizens are extended in respect of travels upto second class-AC-two tier and three-tier?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Due to financial constraints, it has not been possible to extend the concession to higher classes.

(c) if the concession is extended to A.C. two tier and A.C. three tier classes, the approximate loss on this is estimated to be Rs. 10 Crores per annum.

Recruitment in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan

*234. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:
SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that promotional quota for different categories of employees of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan is filled first and recruitment for open quota (direct quota) follows thereafter; and

(b) the reasons and justification, if any, for not adhering to the said provision with regard to recruitment to the post of LDCs?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI): (a) and (b) In accordance with the guidelines approved by the Board of Governors of the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, the following is the sequence in respect of promotional posting/transfer etc. of teachers including Vice-Principal, Principal and above:—

(1) Posting on promotion;

(2) Intra-regional Transfer;

(3) Intra-regional Transfer;

(4) Posting on direct recruitment.

No guidelines regarding the sequence for posting of non-teaching staff including the posts of LDCs have been laid down.

Protection of Jantar Mantar

*235. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the "Times of India", dated October 20, 1996 captioned "Unitech's shadow over Jantar Mantar";

(b) if so, the steps taken to ensure that no high building is constructed within 100 metres of a protected monument and no construction takes places withour obtaining a "No objection certificate" from Archaeological Survey of India (ASI); and